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AFGHANISTAN

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DOC Office: +93 (0) 700 11 4015
E-mail: kabulaiddoc@usaid.gov
<http://afghanistan.usaid.gov>

FACT SHEET

Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program (CHAMP)

OVERVIEW

More than 80 percent of Afghans rely on agriculture to support their families. The Commercial Horticulture and Agriculture Marketing Program (CHAMP) helps Afghan farmers increase yield and quality, and access new global markets for six key value chains – pomegranates, apples, almonds, grapes, apricots, and melons.

CHAMP's value-chain approach starts with the Afghan farmer, continues with the local trader, and ends with the buyer who receives high-quality produce. CHAMP's agribusiness activities grow Afghanistan's agricultural sector, create jobs, improve livelihoods, and boost the economy. CHAMP covers 17 provinces in central, eastern, southeastern, and southern Afghanistan.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Establishing new orchards and vineyards and rehabilitating existing ones
- Linking farmers with traders, and traders with domestic and international markets
- Improving the performance of new and existing businesses by working along the value chain
- Providing employment opportunities for women

RESULTS TO DATE

- Benefitted almost 36,000 Afghan households through a value-chain approach ranging from establishing commercial orchards to exporting high-quality produce.
- Planted more than 2.8 million fruit saplings and grape cuttings and established 6,030 hectares of fruit orchards and vineyards in partnership with 19,000 farmers.
- Converted 394 hectares of traditional vineyards to trellising. Trellises double grapes' yield and farmers' income versus the traditional method of growing grapes in bushes near the ground.
- Established more than 870 farmer groups with over 12,000 members, including more than 540 women. With CHAMP support, members participate in community-based Farmer Field Schools to learn new agricultural practices, receive modern agricultural inputs, and share experiences.
- Trained more than 88,000 farmers on improved agricultural techniques covering planting, fertilization, irrigation, and disease and pest prevention. Of the 88,000 farmers, 1,400 were women trained in the same techniques as well as in raising poultry and growing gardens.
- Mainstreamed new agricultural practices, such as grape trellising, pruning ladders, collection baskets, sulfur drying of apricots, and growing produce driven by market demand. These practices are dramatic improvements over traditional methods.
- Helped traders adopt world standards by introducing carton boxes and plastic containers to reduce damage to fruit and provided assistance in marketing to meet buyer demand.
- Supported participation of Afghan businessmen and businesswomen in exhibitions such as Dubai's Gulfood and India International Trade Fair to open up new markets for Afghan produce.
- Assisted Afghan businesswomen in finding buyers in new markets and supported the export of 36 metric tons of their raisins valued at \$68,400 to Saudi Arabia.
- Facilitated the export of more than 7,000 metric tons of fresh fruit, dried fruit, and nuts with an estimated value of \$6.5 million to international markets including Pakistan, Bahrain, Canada, India, the United Arab Emirates, Russia, and Saudi Arabia.
- Generated 5,908 permanent full-time jobs in areas such as pre-harvest and post-harvest handling as well as exporting since the start of the project.